

Auditorium Annex (Now Pick-Congress Hotel)  
504 South Michigan Avenue  
Chicago  
Cook County  
Illinois

HABS NO. ILL-1012

HABS  
ILL,  
16-CHIG,  
39A-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Washington Planning and Service Center  
1730 North Lynn Street  
Arlington, Virginia

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. ILL-1012

## AUDITORIUM ANNEX (NOW PICK-CONGRESS HOTEL)

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Location: 504 South Michigan Avenue, southwest corner Michigan Avenue and Congress Street, Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.

Present Owner: Central Hotel Company.

Present Occupant: Pick-Congress Hotel.

Present Use: Hotel.

Statement of Significance: This building was designed as an extension of the Auditorium Hotel just across Congress Street, built 1885-89, Adler and Sullivan, Architects. The Annex was the largest and one of the best of the many hotels designed by Clinton J. Warren.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: The chain of title for the Auditorium Annex is recorded in Book 461, pp. 325-326, in Cook County Recorder's Office.

The Auditorium Annex was built originally as an extension to the Auditorium Hotel. The owner for many years, mentioned as early as 1892 in legal documents (documents 1671776, 1671777) was the Congress Hotel Company. The Auditorium Hotel ceased functioning as a hotel, and for many years the Annex was known as the Congress Hotel. The present owners, Central Hotel Company, Albert Pick, Jr., Agent, acquired the building in 1952 (documents 15433570, 15479403), and the name of the building was changed to Pick-Congress Hotel.

2. Date of Erection: 1893.
3. Architect: Clinton J. Warren (born 1860).
4. Original plans, construction, etc.: The original building, the north block of the present structure, is 8 bays wide on the Michigan Avenue front side, and was designed as a pendant to the Auditorium Building with a similar facade treatment. The original building was 11 stories high, contained 500 rooms, and cost \$1,000,000.

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5. Notes on alterations and additions: A small addition to the south, four stories high and four bays wide, was added before 1898. The large south portion of the present building, originally an apartment annex, was built in two stages in 1902 and 1907, Holabird and Roche, architects. In its final form the building contains about 1600 rooms. The interiors have been re-decorated many times, usually by Holabird and Roche or their successors Holabird and Root. Some of these later decorations attracted considerable attention (see bibliography below).

B. Sources of Information:

"Art Treasures," Fine Arts Journal, Vol. XXXIV (October, 1917), pp. 35-48.

The Brickbuilder, 1903, pp. 31, 50, 71. Floor plans

Condit, Carl W., The Rise of the Skyscraper (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1952), pp. 226-227, 229, fig. 81.

"Congress Casino, Chicago, Illinois, Holabird and Root, Architects," Architectural Forum, Vol. LXVI (June, 1937), pp. 534-536.

"The Congress Hotel and Annex," Architectural Review, Vol. XIX, new series Vol. II (April, 1913), pp. 86-87, 160. Plans and photographs.

"The Congress Hotel, Chicago, Illinois," Architects' and Builders' Magazine, Vol. XL, No. 5, pp. 216-224. Text and photographs.

"Elizabethan Room, Congress Hotel, Chicago," Architectural Record, Vol. XXXI (April, 1912), plate following p. 344.

"Interior Views, New Auditorium Annex, Chicago," Inland Architect and News Record, Vol. XL (January, 1903), plate opposite p. 52.

"The New Elizabethan Room, Small Banqueting Room, New Ballroom, Auditorium Annex Hotel, Chicago," Architectural Review, Vol. XV (April, 1908), pp. 75-77, plates 17-20, 24.

"New Murals Go Up Here," Scrapbook of Art and Artists of Chicago (1952), p. 64.

Randall, Frank A., History of the Development of Building Construction in Chicago (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1949), pp. 134-135, 172

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PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This building has a facade treatment similar to Sullivan's design for the Auditorium building, and serves as a compliment to Sullivan's design, giving a strongly unified effect to the corner of Congress Street and Michigan Avenue.
2. Condition of Fabric: Good.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Number of stories: Original building 10 stories plus one basement. South addition 14 stories plus one basement.
2. Overall dimensions: Original building 178' on Michigan Avenue, 173' on Congress Street. The present building fills the entire east half of the block between Congress and Harrison Streets.
3. Foundations: Original building on spread foundation, south addition on piles and caissons.
4. Wall construction: Gray granite exterior walls. The high arcaded fenestration pattern of the Auditorium building is repeated, but using projecting bay windows. The wall surface of the Annex are crisp and smooth compared with the rough, rock-faced surface and modulated openings of the Auditorium Building.
5. Structural system, framing: Exterior masonry walls, interior steel skeleton frame.

- C. Description of Interior: The building has a typical arrangement of rooms with shops, restaurants, and public rooms on the lower floors, and guest rooms on the upper floors arranged in two rectangular blocks around light wells.

Prepared by Osmond R. Overby, Supervising Architect,  
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